

December 23, 2002

EX PARTE PRESENTATION

Mr. Jordan Goldstein
Senior Legal Advisor
Commissioner Copps
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room 8 B201
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Verizon Petition for Emergency Declaratory and Other Relief,
CC Docket No. 02-202

Dear Mr. Goldstein:

It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will soon be setting policy guidelines in regards to the above-referenced docket. The actions that the FCC will take are extremely important to incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs). The FCC's guidelines will set the course for the future as to how ILECs will be able to protect themselves from the financial harm that ensues when a customer carrier defaults on its debts to ILECs.

When ILECs are unable to recover all debt owed them for services in a bankruptcy proceeding of an interconnecting service provider, the FCC should provide ILECs a clear pricing mechanism to recover such cost. NECA has filed tariff amendments intended to clarify actions to be taken should a customer demonstrate itself to be in financial distress or at increased risk for nonpayment of its bills. The FCC needs to allow companies to take reasonable measures, such as those proposed in the NECA tariff amendments, in advance of any given interconnecting carrier's bankruptcy to assure that ILECs will receive payments for their services so that they can continue to provide their customers telecommunications services. Allowing ILECs to require advance deposits from interconnecting carriers, or allowing advance billing and/or prepayment for anticipated services will prevent failures of interconnecting carriers from causing the financial failure of other service providers, and the subsequent loss of service to end users.

Enabling the continuity of service by limiting the financial fallout from companies facing bankruptcy is of utmost importance. Epic Touch Co. believes that adoption of the revised tariffs will best ensure the bankruptcies will not cause the loss of service to ILEC end users.

Sincerely,

Trenton D. Boaldin
President